

Message Text

PAGE 01 BONN 15630 01 OF 02 291919Z

46

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W

----- 107664

O 291910Z OCT 73 ZFF 4

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8366

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 15630

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, GW

SUBJECT: MOVEMENT OF US MILITARY MATERIEL FROM FRG
TO MIDDLE EAST

REF: STATE 212635

1. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND CALLED ON FRG FONOFF STATE SECRETARY FRANK OCTOBER 29 TO DISCUSS FURTHER MATTER OF ARMS SUPPLY TO ISRAEL FROM US STOCKS IN FRG. HE PRESENTED FULLY THE DEPARTMENT'S ASSUMPTIONS (PER REFTEL) WITH REGARD TO ABILITY OF US SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT TO CONTINUE TO RESUPPLY THE MID-EAST FROM THE FRG, AND OF FLAG VESSELS OF NON-BELLIGERENTS TO CONDUCT SIMILAR RESUPPLY EFFORTS.

2. FRANK REPLIED THAT BASED ON VON STADEN'S TALK WITH THE SECRETARY OCTOBER 26, THE US COULD WELL DRAW THE CONCLUSION LOGICALLY THAT SUCH ASSUMPTIONS WERE WARRANTED. HOWEVER, HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE TO BRING THESE POINTS TO THE ATTENTION OF HIGHER AUTHORITIES IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR A FINAL DECISION.

3. FRANK THEN LAUNCHED INTO A REVIEW OF THE DIFFICULT SITUATION CREATED BY THE INVOLVEMENT OF ISRAELI SHIPS IN THE RESUPPLY OPERATION, COMMENTING THAT THIS ASPECT HAD BROUGHT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S CREDIBILITY INTO VERY SERIOUS QUESTION WITH THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS. HE

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PAGE 02 BONN 15630 01 OF 02 291919Z

NOTED IN PASSING THAT THE QUESTION OF US AIRCRAFT RESUPPLYING ISRAEL FROM THE FRG WAS OF COURSE A "SPECIAL" MATTER. FRANK ALSO STRESSED THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

HAD AT NO POINT EVER FORBIDDEN THE USG TO DO ANYTHING FROM FRG TERRITORY. HIS DEMARCHES LAST WEEK HAD BEEN IN THE NATURE OF POLITICAL REQUESTS. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND RAISED THE PROBLEM OF THE CONTINUING PUBLIC STATEMENTS BEING MADE IN THE GERMAN NEWS MEDIA. HE SAID HE FOUND SUCH COMMENTARIES, WHICH WERE APPARENTLY BASED ON LEAKS FROM OFFICIAL FRG SOURCES, TO BE UNHELPFUL IN THE PRESENT SITUATION. HE THOUGHT IT WAS IN BOTH SIDES INTEREST NOW TO AVOID FURTHER STATEMENTS THAT MIGHT EXACERBATE THE SITUATION. TO THAT END, HE HAD ENSURED THAT THE EMBASSY MAINTAIN A STRICT STANCE OF NO COMMENT TO ALL PRESS QUERIES ON PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS. HE HOPED THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD SHOW SIMILAR RESTRAINT.

4. FRANK SAID HE WAS IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT WITH THIS APPROACH. HE SAID THE FONOFF HAD COMMITTED AN EGREGIOUS BLUNDER IN PUTTING OUT THE PRESS STATEMENT ON OCTOBER 25. THIS STATEMENT HAD NEVER BEEN INTENDED FOR FORMAL WRITTEN ISSUANCE. IT HAD BEEN DRAWN UP TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR THE FOREIGN OFFICE PRESS OFFICER. THROUGH SOME ERROR ON SOMEONE'S PART, THE STATEMENT HAD GONE OUT AS A WRITTEN DECLARATION.

SECRET

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PAGE 01 BONN 15630 02 OF 02 291918Z

42

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8367

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 15630

EXDIS

5. FRANK EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER'S FRANK AND OPEN EXPLANATION OF THE US POSITION AND PREMISES MADE TO AMBASSADOR VON STADEN. HE THOUGHT THAT THIS SORT OF OPEN DIALOGUE WOULD PERMIT THE FRG AND THE OTHER ALLIES TO CONSIDER THE NATURE OF THE GENERAL PROBLEM IN A REASONABLE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD MANNER. ALL SIDES WOULD THEN KNOW FROM WHAT BASIS THEY WERE PROCEEDING. FRANK SAID THAT EVENTS OF THE LAST TWO WEEKS HAD CONVINCED HIM OF THE NEED FOR A BETTER COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM BETWEEN THE MAJOR ALLIES. HE WAS SURE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE INTER-ALLIED COMMUNICA-

TIONS DURING THE CUBAN CRISIS IN 1962 HAD BEEN
SUPERIOR TO THAT OF RECENT WEEKS.

6. COMMENT: FRANK APPEARED SOMEWHAT SUBDUED IN THE
DISCUSSION WITH THE AMBASSADOR. CERTAINLY THE HARD
TONES OF LAST WEEK WERE NOTICEABLY ABSENT FROM TODAY'S TALK.

7. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND PRESSED FRANK HARD FOR AN
URGENT CLARIFICATION OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S POSI-
TION ON THE POINTS THE AMBASSADOR HAD RAISED. FRANK
SAID THAT HE WOULD ENDEAVOR TO OBTAIN A POSITION AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE, NOTING THAT CHANCELLOR BRANDT WAS
AWAY IN FRANCE ON A BRIEF VACATION AND THAT FONMIN
SCHEEL WAS NOW ACTING CHANCELLOR.

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PAGE 02 BONN 15630 02 OF 02 291918Z

HILLENBRAND

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